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Arizona Gourds

(Somewhat irregular) news from the desert southwest...

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Welcome to the February issue of the Arizona Gourds newsletter!

OK - I admit it - despite my best intentions I find that life seems strange without working on a newsletter each month! So, welcome to the first "slightly irregular" newsletter from Arizona Gourds. I thought it was important to publish at least a shorter version this month, as it's almost time for me to head to the **Wuertz Festival in Casa Grande, Arizona** and I have some future class offerings and a special new award to mention!

I'll be teaching a class on Thursday before the Wuertz festival (outdoors in my usual location, at the building just to the far side of the restrooms) and I'll be in the same booth location that I've had every year, **D8 & E8**, right at the crossroads of several aisles. I'll be bringing all the supplies from the website, plus a few extras. This is the only show each year where I actually have a vendor booth. I do sell out of some items early, so if you would like to place a preorder for pickup at the show, please send me an email including your list of items and what day you will pick them up.

PLEASE NOTE: Orders placed on the website from February 4th -February 8th will be delayed. In addition, some items may be out of stock due to sales at the festival. To avoid additional delays during restocking, please place your web orders before these dates!

Wuertz Farm's 11th Annual
"Running of the Gourds" Gourd Festival

February 6-7-8, 2014
at the Pinal Fairgrounds - Casa Grande,
Arizona

FRIDAY & SATURDAY 9:00am-5:00pm
SUNDAY 10:00am-3:00pm

Admission: \$8 (Kids FREE)
Rain or Shine, Most Activities Indoors



*Join the class updates list to receive advance notice of upcoming classes. Get the news first and have the best chance for popular classes!

[Free 30 day trial of Amazon Prime!](#)



*ALL Amazon purchases made through site links and the search box help support Arizona Gourds and the Gourd Art Enthusiasts websites, and it costs you nothing extra!

Update: Gourd Classes

Wuertz Festival Update: My class sessions are full.

*Enter your email address and hit submit to join the class updates notification list.

Submit

Tucson Classes: There are classes available at the end of February and beginning of March at my Tucson home. Please visit the [classes page](#) for more information and how to register. *I have just opened up spaces in a Faux Raku class on Monday, March 1st.

April 25th -27th Classes at the annual art retreat at the [After Midnight Art Ranch](#) in Sonoita, Arizona. The retreat is full, but please check with Linda Hanson at After Midnight to sign up for the wait list for specific classes.

NEW - I will be teaching in Blue Diamond, Nevada (just outside of Las Vegas) on April 30th and May 1st. Registration is now open - check the [classes page](#) for details.

What's new on the [Arizona Gourds website?](#)

Preorders for the Wuertz Festival:
Some items may sell out early or are available in limited quantities.

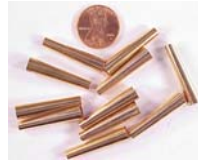
If you would like to preorder specific items, please consider emailing me your preorder. This will ensure you will get the specific items you want before they possibly sell out. Preorders will be accepted up until Tuesday, February 4th. Email me a list of what you want, and please indicate what day you anticipate picking up your order. Ask for your order - they will be checked safely away for you. Email:

arizonagourds.com

***Festival offerings - some items at our booth (including the turtle shells shown here) may not be available online due to state laws or shipping difficulties.**



Lots of unusual Mark Making supplies on the [Metals, Embellishments](#) and [Special Embellishments](#) pages!



Excellence in Gourd Artistry



Special Announcement: To reward excellence in artistry, and to promote interest in entering artwork in gourd competitions, Arizona Gourds will offer a special 2014 "Gourd Artistry" award including a cash prize.

This year, any gourd art that wins "Best of Show", "People's Choice" or "Best of Division" awards, OR is entered into a "Grand Master" category at any 2014 AGS gourd show, will be eligible to compete for a \$100 cash award OR a \$150 merchandise credit from Arizona Gourds. In addition, a \$50 donation will be made to the state society that hosted the show where the winner qualified. (If the winning entry won awards at more than one show, the donation will be divided among these state societies.) Other prizes may also be awarded depending on the number of entries received.

How to enter: If your gourd meets one of these criteria, submit up to three photos of your prize winning gourd, and at the end of 2014, the winner will be announced. **Because the judges will be basing their decisions on photos and will not be able to see the finished piece, it is very important that clear, high quality photos are submitted!** It will be your responsibility to submit photos of your art, but competition chairpersons are strongly encouraged to submit the photo entries for all of the qualifying winners at their shows. Please include information about your photo including at which show the prize was awarded, your full name and contact information, and any special information about the piece you would like to include.

After a show is completed, please send photos and information about each winning piece to: ArizonaGourds@gmail.com or bonnie@ArizonaGourds.com. Please put "Gourd Artistry Award Submission" in the subject line.

Entries may also be mailed to Arizona Gourds, 5930 N Camino Arizpe Tucson, AZ 85718-4612

Here's a photo of the Arizona Gourds Booth at the Wuertz Gourd Festival in 2013. This was taken before the show opened - it looked a bit different by Sunday afternoon!



originally published a few years ago. Successful, especially if you've never been able plenty of time to visit the the day to avoid long lines.

ow!

- 1) Make a list of what raw gourds and supplies you REALLY need. Make a list, and write down everything you can think of. Then, prioritize which items you must purchase and the ones that you can live without. If you need any tools or books, add them to the list too. Write down specific questions you want to ask vendors about tool use, glues, materials, etc. Set a budget and plan to stick to it.
- 2) Be prepared to walk a lot, and take a fold up shopping bag and drinking water with you. You may also want to pack a light healthy snack to avoid the temptation to buy expensive, fattening goodies. Walk around the show area first, just checking it out and asking prices, and making mental notes of where you saw things of interest. Then do a second round and buy the things on the top of your list first. (However, if you see something truly exceptional and one of a kind, you may have to make a snap decision or risk losing out!)
- 3) When choosing what to wear to the show, add a gourd name tag or other gourd jewelry. These items are eye-catchers, which will lead to compliments and comments, and is a great way to make new friends. You may even want to wear your State Society T-Shirt or Gourd Art Enthusiast apparel to connect with others. Dress in layers as it may be cold in the morning and heat up later in the day. Wear comfortable shoes, as many show venues are on hard concrete or uneven gravel.
- 4) **Be prepared with cash and checks as well as credit cards, as smaller vendors very often do not accept credit cards. If you use a credit card, please be aware that venue may not be accessible to good cell signals and it may be difficult for the vendor to complete a transaction. Always carry some cash or checks as alternate methods of payment just in case. (Note - this is definitely true at the Wuertz festival - cell access is poor and a lot of the vendors do not take credit cards.)**
- 5) When you ask prices on finished gourd art, make sure you take into account factors such as quality of the work, originality, and your own gut feeling. Remember that many new artists often make the mistake of pricing their work too low. Their first show may be your only opportunity to purchase a particular artists' piece at a low price.
- 6) Allow yourself some splurge money, but determine how much before arriving at the show. After you have done all your priority shopping, then you can just buy what you like, but only up to your preset max. If you can, take a break halfway through the show and evaluate your current purchases. Have you ever realized halfway through the show that you bought certain items twice, at different vendors?
- 7) Shows are the best place to actually try out tools to see which woodburner, saw or other tool really works well for you. Don't just take the word of the vendor that their tool is "the best". Whenever possible, try it yourself. Does the tool meet your needs, is it within your budget? Ask other gourders you meet at classes or at the show for their opinion. People that actually use these tools day to day will give you a more honest assesment than you may get from an inexperienced but eager sales person.
- 8) When purchasing, ask the name of the vendor for their card or write the cost of the item and the name of the supplier on the package, business card or receipt. This helps you to remember the cost of certain items, where to buy more of a specific or hard to find item from a supplier in the future; and to write accurate descriptions of the materials used in your gourd creations. Remember, most of the vendors are people who love gourds just like you do, and they can become good friends. Later on, you can contact them and buy needed items direct.
- 9) Always ask first before taking photographs at a show. Some vendors will have a sign posted if they do not want you to take pictures. Never assume that it is ok; it only takes a few seconds to ask, and the vendor will appreciate the courtesy.
- 10) Finally, wash your hands after leaving the show. Handling raw gourds and even supplies all day can leave you feeling grubby. When leaving, ask for a "return pass" at the exit if you intend to return, most shows allow re-entry later that day.

Most of all, remember to have fun... !!!

The [Gourd Art Enthusiasts site](#) continues to grow! We have about 3750 members, with gourd enthusiasts from all over the world! Membership is free and easy. The site also has state groups, event listings, a Q&A forum and a chat feature if you need an quick answer to a gourd question! [Check out our two great new GAE T-Shirt designs!](#)



[Share our Newsletter on your Facebook page!](#)

"Like" Arizona Gourds on Facebook to get special offers, up to the minute news about new products and classes, and other gourd updates. (Just a note - I don't add gourd friends on my personal page, I save that for family and non-gourding friends.)

Special Feature - Book Review



[Focus on Feathers](#)

I recently purchased a new book, "*Focus on Feathers: A Complete Guide to American Indian Feather Craft*", by J. Andrew Forsythe.

This is an extremely helpful book for those who work with feathers, such as on gourd masks, or for those who want to carve or paint them realistically. Because it is illegal to own many of the feathers used in Native American art, this book provides very extensive photo references for raptor and other federally protected feathers. The book includes study of endangered bird feathers and how to convincingly imitate them as a decorative alternative. If you are interested in creating replica ceremonial regalia, there are also assembly instructions for various kinds of accessories, including bustles, rattles, and headdresses.

Reader's Mailbag

I want to thank all of you that wrote me about my decision to write fewer and shorter newsletters. While many expressed their disappointment, everyone was very supportive of my choice. I am very grateful to have interacted with so many over the years and have enjoyed serving the gourd community with my various endeavors such as the Gourd Art Enthusiasts website and the Arizona Gourds Facebook page. I still plan to stay active in the gourd world - I'm just scaling back a bit.

At this time, I'd like to encourage all of you to join the American Gourd Society if for no other reason than to receive the full color "Gourd Magazine", which is published quarterly. Your \$15 membership fee is a bargain when you consider the value of the magazine alone. I am currently serving as the Vice President of the AGS, and have been privy to discussions about the decline in membership and the possible need to increase the yearly dues to cover the loss of revenue. The more members we have, the more cost effective our efforts are - and your membership not only gets you a great magazine but supports programs such as AGS judging standards and training.

Please visit www.americangourdsociety.org and join today!



Reader's Mailbag

Hi Bonnie, I have always admired your work and enjoy the photos you post. Here are a few of my favorite pieces. I burn them deep so they look carved and paint with acrylics. I am a retired Elementary teacher. We raise and show Arabian horses and Borzoi, and I usually sell my work at a few of the large Arab shows. **Carol Newell Walter - CA**



Reader's Mailbag

Hi Bonnie, I've been a customer of yours both for finished and unfinished supplies that enabled me to begin working with gourds myself. I've read a couple of your books, still in my collection from infancy, but I'm really proud of what is my 6th piece of completed gourd work. I wanted to share a couple photos with you. Thanks for inspiring me! Best regards, Sheri Harris - AZ



Reader's Mailbag

Oh, Bonnie - PLEASE take time for yourself to be creative. I know that deep need too, and support you in your plan. Thought I'd share a photo of a gourd I made using porcupine quills. I donated it to an auction, and the buyer was thrilled. Donna Ahlstrand - CA

Reader's Mailbag

I FINALLY finished a couple of the gourds I started at the last retreat, and I am attaching pictures. Val Kimball - VA



Reader's Mailbag

You brighten my day once a month when I receive your newsletter BUT I understand your need to create. Your continuation of gourd supplies is wonderful because around here (St. Louis MO) very very few store carry small tools we gourders need. I like to see the tools I'm buying. I'll thankfully buy from someone who has used the tools and knows what gourding is all about. Thank you Bonnie for sharing the newsletter on a regular basis and it will be a pleasant surprise when your new ones pop into my box. Have a wonderful new year. Jackie

Reader's Mailbag

Here is a picture of two of my pieces. (Right) BJ Schumacher - AZ



Tip of the Month: Glue Stand

Maybe it is just a small frustration - but if you are gluing feathers on a mask or something else where you need the glue NOW, you don't want to wait for it to flow down from the bottom of your already partially used glue container! This handy glue stand sits on your desk top and keeps the glue ready to flow instantly. I made some of these for my workbench and they come in really handy. This is made to fit a standard 4 oz glue bottles such as Weldbond, Tacky and other cylindrical shapes.

**You can make your own from scrap lumber - or if you don't feel that ambitious, you can purchase one for \$5 on the "Tools" page!*



Do you have any helpful tips? We'd love to share them with our readers, and we'll be sure to give you proper credit. Please send them to: bonnie@arizonagourds.com.

Featured Gourd of the Month:

"Wild Brothers II" Gourd Mask

Carved canteen gourd with inset stone and pebbles, antlers, turkey, macaw and pheasant feathers, horsehair, rusted tin cones and deerskin.

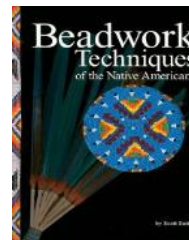


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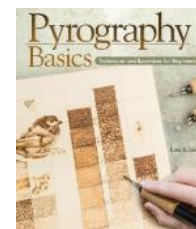
Featured Books of the Month:



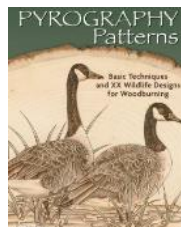
[On Feathered Wings](#)



[Beadwork Techniques of the Native Americans](#)



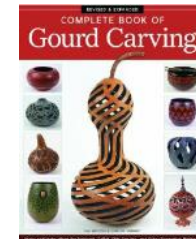
[Pyrography Basics](#)



[Pyrography Patterns](#)



[Creative Embellishments for Gourd Art](#)



[Complete Book of Gourd Carving, Revised & Expanded](#)

On Feathered Wings is a great birds in flight reference book, and *Beadwork Techniques of the Native Americans* will give you lots of ideas for your Native design gourds. The Pyrography books are now available. *Creative Embellishments for Gourd Art* is due out on January 28th - so order now to get your copy as soon as possible. *The Complete Book of Gourd Carving* is a new, revised publication with expanded material including a gallery section from top of the line gourd carvers. (I have some more material in this version as well). You can preorder it now to guarantee the best price.

Thanks for checking out the latest news! Feel free to pass the newsletter link along to your friends. <http://www.arizonagourds.com/Feb14.html>

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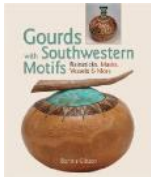
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Arizona Gourds HOME



**Gourds with Southwestern
Motifs** by Bonnie Gibson

The hardcover edition is now out
of print. This is the paperback
version of my "Gourds" book.

All copies I sell are autographed.

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